

Patent
Attorney's Docket No. 001560-406

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of)
Toshihiro MORI et al.) Group Art Unit: Not Yet Assigned
Application No.: Not Yet Assigned) Examiner: Not Yet Assigned
Filed: October 12, 2001)
For: HYDROGEN-ABSORBING ALLOY)
AND HYDROGEN-ABSORBING)
ALLOY ELECTRODE)

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Prior to examination of the above-identified patent application please amend the application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please replace Claim 5 with the following and add new Claims 9-12:

5. (Amended) A hydrogen-absorbing alloy according to claim 2, wherein the heat-treatment comprises solution treatment conducted for 1 min to 100 hr at a temperature range of from 700 to 1500°C, and one or both treatments selected from quenching and aging of from 350 to 1200°C after solution treatment.

9. (New) A hydrogen-absorbing alloy having the composition according to claim 2, wherein the principle phase exists within the range where a body-centered cubic

structure appears and a spinodal decomposition occurs, exclusive of a C14 single-phase region, where C14 is a typical structure of a Laves phase and MgZn₂ type crystal structure; and said principal phase has a regular periodical structure and its apparent lattice constant is from 0.2950 nm to 0.3150 nm.

10. (New) A cell electrode comprising said hydrogen-absorbing alloy according to claim 2.

11. (New) A cell electrode according to claim 10, wherein said cell electrode has excellent cell characteristics in the maximum discharge capacity and the capacity retaining ratio after 100 charge/discharge cycles.

12. (New) A cell electrode according to claim 11, wherein the maximum discharge capacity is 375 to 465 mAh/g and the capacity retaining ratio after 100 charge/discharge cycles is 80 to 95%.

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REMARKS

The present application is a divisional of Application No. 09/301,458 and Claims 2, 5 and 9-12 are presented for examination. In the event that there are any questions concerning this amendment, or the application in general, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned attorney so that prosecution of the application may be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Mark-Up Copy of Claim 5

5. (Amended) A hydrogen-absorbing alloy according to claim 2 [or 3], wherein
the heat-treatment comprises solution treatment conducted for 1 min to 100 hr at a
temperature range of from 700 to 1500°C, and one or both treatments selected from
quenching and aging of from 350 to 1200°C after solution treatment.